

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR JANICE HAHN

December 12, 2017

Food Insecurity Among Students in Los Angeles County

Food insecurity is on the rise among college students in Los Angeles County. In fact, a study conducted in 2016 for the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) found that one in every five of the District's 230,000 students is homeless, and nearly two-thirds are not able to afford adequate, nutritious food. In fact, the survey showed that college students in LACCD's nine campuses fare worse than the national average. While community colleges in Los Angeles County and the California State University system have been working to find solutions for their students, the fact remains that many college students – especially homeless college students – are not able to access a sustainable supply of healthy food.

For example, students who are eligible for national food assistance programs, such as CalFresh (which is California's version of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), may not know that they are eligible and/or know how to access these services. Further, not every college campus has a food pantry or is connecting students to the services that are available in the community.

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The issue of food insecurity does not only affect our college students. Many students in our 81 school districts rely on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) for sustained nutrition. However, many students lose access to nutritious meals during the summer and winter vacations. Programs like the Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Feeding options help provide free, healthy meals to children ages 18 and under in low-income neighborhoods, but we must ensure that these programs are available to all students who need supplemental access to food.

Food insecurity is especially critical for children and young adults because it can lead to health issues, reduce the immune system, stunt growth, and make it harder for children to learn as quickly as their well-fed peers.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct DPSS to report-back in 90 days on a comprehensive food nutrition access program for all students, which includes but not limited to:

- 1) Working with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) on a food nutrition access plan for 81 school districts;
- 2) Working with all community colleges in the County to help all eligible students gain access to food nutrition programs, including, but not limited to, CalFresh; and
- 3) Working with the California State University to complement their efforts to expand nutrition assistance to students who are food insecure.

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